

Sources of the Modern Cinema

The cinema of poetry, dream, and illusion. Emphasis is on trends in the imaginative, fantastic, and experimental cinema, as distinguished from the realistic, narrative film. The series analyzes the visual, plastic, and kinetic elements in specific films and the nonrational, magical propensities of cinema.

Film as a visual art: differences between poetic and realist-documentary cinema; the irreducible mystery and magic of art; the problem of truth; the destruction and reconstitution of time and space.

Experiment in Soviet Russia I: the pure cinema; Lenin and the cinema; rhythm, montage, juxtaposition as elements of film art; stylization and "Typage"; the conflict between individual (bourgeois) drama and collective (revolutionary) film art; Eisenstein's techniques.

Experiment in Soviet Russia II: Vertov's experimental 'Kino Eye' movement; the abolition of the story film; the director as the eye of the camera; the camera as the protagonist; a politically and esthetically revolutionary cinema.

Surrealism and the cinema: Europe in decline; the subversion of surrealism; the rebellion against rationalism; the magic of dream; Freud and the discovery of the subconscious; automatic art; surrealism as anti-art.

Expressionism and the cinema: exaggeration and stylization; expressionism as the art of unrest; the dynamics of irregularity and distortion; social sources of expressionism.

The terrible poetry of Nazism: The philosophy, psychology, and pathology of mass manipulation; the German Nazi convention, a pseudo-event created for the camera 'absorbs' reality; the formation of national myths; pagan and ritual elements; collective man and homosexual implications; the magic potential of film for propaganda.

Abstraction, Dada, and Pop: abstract art as offspring of surrealism, romantic realism, and cubism; abstractionists as true realists; objects as protagonists of pop art; the ambiguity and magic of the object; symbols and icons; the esthetics of expendability, chance, and reproducibility; Pop art as protest or acceptance.

Ritual, myth, and dream: the collective dreams of mankind; from surrealism to Jung; archetypes as inherited race symbols; the 'logic' of myth; rites of initiation and of passage; the myth of the hero; immortality as intent of ritual.

The new worldview: science and philosophy; science increases complexity and mystery of reality; scientific truth as metaphor; relativity of space, time, and motion; the dethronement of man; Heisenberg's principle of indeterminacy.

The new worldview and the cinema: the breakup of empires and

ideologies; the message of Dachau and Hiroshima; the humiliations of science; the coldness of existentialism; the end of narrative structures; the invasion of irrationality; the devaluation of language; cinema as the essence of modern art.

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